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PRESS RELEASE

Representatives of East Timor solidarity groups from the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Portugal, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom held their Tenth Consultation in London on 10 and 11 March 1990. The Consultation invited the leaders of the East Timor National Convergence, Abilio Araujo of Fretilin and Paulo Pires of UDT. The meeting was also attended by representatives from solidarity groups in Japan and Australia.

The leaders of the East Timor National Convergence presented a detailed account of the re-organisation of the national resistance inside East Timor and the Peace Plan formulated by Xanana Gusmao, leader of the East Timor National Resistance. The Consultation once again stated their support for the right of selfdetermination of the East Timorese people. Efforts and political initiatives to pursue this fundamental right were wellcomed, if the full participation of East Timorese representatives is guaranteed. The Consultation also decided to write a letter of support to Mgr. Belo, Apostolic Administrator of Dili, who advocated under difficult circumstances, the idea of a referendum. The meeting expressed once again admiration towards the courage of the Bishop.

The meeting discussed recent events in East Timor where there has been an upsurge of resistance in the cities particularly among the youth. The meeting listened to an eyewitness account of an Australian visitor of a peaceful demonstration during the visit of the US ambassador to Dili. This demonstration was violently repressed by the Indonesian police forces.

The discussion took place in an atmosphere of optimism based on profound changes in many countries of the world and took note of the encouraging signs of democratic opposition in Indonesia.

The meeting emphasized the political importance of the newly established Parliamentarians for East Timor. It welcomed the growth of PET which now has more than two hundred members from ten countries in all parts of the world and discussed ways of intensifying solidarity work among parliamentarians. It condemned the Timor Gap Treaty signed last December between Indonesia and Australia which involves the division of property stolen from the people of East Timor between the two signatory countries and welcomed the PET's decision to undertake an investigation of this illegal Treaty. The Consultation are urging the Portugese Government to file a complaint about the illegality of the Treaty at the International Court of Justice .

It discussed the work of solidarity groups at the UN Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of

Discrimination and Protect of Minorities and agreed to step up activities to lobby in support of the resolution on human rights in East Timor adopted last August by the Sub-Commission. The meeting also discussed mutual efforts to organise a hearing on East Timor within the European Parliament and a general Plan of activities was discussed and endorsed by the meeting.

It was decided that on Monday 12 March 1990 a delegation will register a protest to the Australian High Commisioner, whose Government is one of the signatories of the Timor Gap Treaty. The Consultation wellcomed that on 13 March the two representatives of the East Timorese National Convergence are invited by the Portugese Embassy to meet British MPs and Euro MPs who have visited the country, and other public figures who have shown concern with East Timor from an academic, human rights or journalistic viewpoint.

The meeting also adopted an appeal addressed to President Suharto of Indonesia not to carry out the execution of six political prisoners. The Consultation wellcomed a similar appeal which had been made by the Twelve EC Countries through the Italian Ambassador in Jakarta.

London 11 March 1990